

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-7, 9-14, 18, 19, 41, 42, 45, 46, 49, and 50 remain in this application. Claims 2-3, 8, 15-17, 20-40, 43-44, 47-48, and 51-59 are or have been canceled. Claims 8-12, 27-31, 47-50, and 55-57 are objected to.

I. CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-7, 13-26, 32, 33, 37-39, 41-46, and 51-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nelson, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,260,020).

The applicants cancel claims 2, 3, 15-17, 20-26, 32, 33, 37-39, 43, 44, and 51-54.

The applicants amend claims 1, 4-7, 17-26, 41, 45, and 46 and submit that claims 1, 4-7, 13-14, 18, 19, 41, 42, 45, and 46 as amended are allowable as indicated by the examiner.

II. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The examiner stated that claims 8-12, 27-31, 47-50, and 55-57 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The applicants amend claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 8 and any intervening claims and cancel claim 8. The applicants adjust the dependency of claims 9-12 accordingly. The applicants cancel claims 27-31. The applicants amend claim 41 to include similar subject matter as amended claim 1. The applicants cancel claims 47 and 48 and adjust the dependency of claims 49 and 50 accordingly. The applicants cancel claims 55-57. As amended, the applicants respectfully submit that the remaining claims are in condition for allowance as discussed above. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request that the examiner remove the objection to the remaining claims.

III. STATEMENT REGARDING CLAIMS

The applicants have commented on the allowability of the claims by addressing the comments by the examiner in this paper as well as previously during the prosecution of this application. By doing so, the applicants are in no way limiting their ability to argue additional points of novelty regarding the independent claims or dependent claims at a later date.

CONCLUSION

The applicants respectfully request a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite the resolution of this case, the examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

In the course of the foregoing discussions, the applicants may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. There may also be other distinctions between the claims and the prior art that have yet to be raised, but that may be raised in the future.

Unless the applicants have specifically stated that an amendment was made to distinguish the prior art, it was the intent of the amendment to further clarify and better define the claimed invention and the amendment was not for the purpose of patentability. Further, although the applicants may have amended certain claims, the applicants have not abandoned their pursuit of obtaining the allowance of these claims as originally filed.

If any fees are inadvertently omitted or if any additional fees are required or have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit those fees to Conley Rose, P.C. Deposit Account Number 03-2769 (ref. 1391-46000) of Conley Rose, P.C., Houston, Texas.

Respectfully submitted,
CONLEY ROSE, P.C.

/Collin A. Rose, Reg. No. 47,036/

Collin A. Rose
Reg. No. 47,036
P.O. Box 3267
Houston, TX 77253-3267
(713) 238-8000 (Phone)
(713) 238-8008 (Fax)